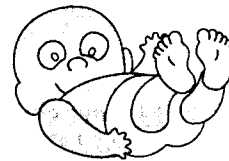


YOUR 15 to 18 MONTH OLD

POINTS TO REMEMBER



SAFETY

- ♥ ALWAYS WASH your hands before preparing food, after changing diapers or using the bathroom to keep your baby from getting infections.
- ♥ WHEN traveling in a vehicle, ALWAYS use a TODDLER CAR SEAT; buckle your child in the seat correctly, and place him/her in the back seat of the car. NEVER leave your child alone in a vehicle. NEVER leave your child alone with a pet or young children.
- ♥ ELIMINATE tobacco smoke in your child's environments (daycare center, the home of your babysitter, relatives, etc). MAKE your car and home no-smoking zones.
- ♥ ALWAYS SUPERVISE your child constantly when he/she is around water. NEVER leave your child alone or trust another young child to supervise him/her around water (bathtub, mop water, bathroom commode, swimming pools). Empty mop water, bathtubs, and swimming pools immediately after use.
- ♥ INSTALL smoke detectors in your home. CHANGE the batteries twice a year when the time changes in the spring and fall.
- ♥ DON'T let your child ride in a vehicle if you suspect the driver has been using alcohol or drugs. DO NOT ALLOW anyone who is drinking or using drugs to provide childcare.
- ♥ CONTINUE TO HAZARD PROOF your home. Use safety locks on cabinets. Keep medicine and poisonous products in a safe, secure, locked place. Be sure there are childproof caps on all medications. If your child accidentally takes medication, or puts a poisonous product in his/her mouth, call the POISON HOTLINE immediately at 1-800-722-5725. Keep Syrup of Ipecac and activated charcoal in your home. Do not use until you call the poison center for directions.
- ♥ PLACE plastic safety plugs in electrical sockets and make sure electric wires, electric cords, outlets, and all appliances are protected from your child. Keep your child away from peeling paint.
- ♥ NEVER UNDERESTIMATE the power of a 15-18 month old child to climb. ALWAYS supervise your child around stairs and place gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Place the crib mattress as low as it will go in the baby bed.
- ♥ GET DOWN ON THE FLOOR at your child's eye level to look for hazards, (coins, buttons, ropes, curtain or mini-blind cords, pins or needles, pencils or ballpoint pens, sharp or rough edges of furniture).
- ♥ ALWAYS CHECK your hot water faucets to make sure your water is not too hot. If the water is too hot, have your hot water heater adjusted. ALWAYS check the bath water with your wrist to make sure the water is not too hot before putting your child in the bathtub.
- ♥ WHEN COOKING, ALWAYS turn pan handles toward the back of the stove. KEEP your child away from hot stoves, space heaters, curling irons, wood stoves, fireplaces, and candles. ALWAYS keep matches and cigarette lighters out of a child's reach.
- ♥ NEVER leave heavy objects or hot liquids close to the edge of a table or on tablecloths where there is a danger your child could get the edge of the tablecloth and pull it down.
- ♥ INSPECT toys for small or damaged parts and do not allow your child to play with toys with rough, broken or sharp edges. DON'T allow your child to play with latex balloons, plastic bags or marbles.
- ♥ If you or your child are experiencing emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, TELL your health-care provider or call the ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-752-6200 for help.

NUTRITION

- ♥ **FEED** your child at family mealtimes and give him\her two to three nutritious snacks a day. **OFFER** your child nutritious foods, **ALLOW** your child to feed him/herself, and let him\her decide how much he\she wants to eat. Encourage your child to use a spoon and fork. **AVOID** giving foods that may cause choking or be inhaled (peanuts, hotdogs, carrot sticks, whole grapes, raisins, corn, whole beans, hard candy, large pieces of raw vegetables or fruit, or tough meat). If you leave your child with a babysitter, make sure he is getting a variety of nutritious foods.
- ♥ **PROVIDE** snacks rich in complex carbohydrates (a slice of bread or crackers), and limit foods high in sugar and fat such as candy, soft drinks and chips.
- ♥ If your child is taking a bottle, it is important to begin weaning now.
- ♥ **ASK** your health care provider about the WIC program.



HEALTHY TEETH

- ♥ **CONTINUE TO TEACH AND HELP** your child brush his\her teeth, using a soft toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste. To encourage healthy teeth, **DO NOT** put your baby to bed with a bottle.

CARE and INTERACTIONS

- ♥ **PRAISE** your child for good behavior. Pick your child up, cuddle, hug, and talk to him/her.
- ♥ **SHOW AFFECTION** in your family; spend individual time with each child.
- ♥ **ENCOURAGE** language development by reading books, singing songs, and talking about what you and your child are seeing and doing together.
- ♥ **LIMIT** the number of family rules and consistently enforce them. **DEVELOP** rules for all the family members.
- ♥ **ENCOURAGE** your child to play alone as well as with playmates, brothers, sisters, or parents. Limit the amount of television your child watches.
- ♥ **USE DISCIPLINE** as a method of teaching and protecting, not as a punishment. To discipline a child, use distraction, gentle restraints or removal of an object. If necessary, **REMOVE** the child for a time-out from the situation and what is bothering him\her. **DISCOURAGE** your child from hitting, biting, and other aggressive behaviors.
- ♥ **DO NOT BEGIN** toilet training too early. **DISCUSS** details of toilet training with the health professional at the next visit.



GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The following milestones are typical for babies as they develop.

A 15 month old child

- ♥ Has a vocabulary of 3-6 words.
- ♥ Feeds self with fingers, drinks from a cup.
- ♥ Listens to a story.
- ♥ Walks well, stoops, climbs stairs, can stack 2 blocks.
- ♥ Indicates what he wants by pointing, grunting, or pulling.
- ♥ Makes gestures and imitates activities of others.

A 18 month old child

- ♥ Has a vocabulary of 15-20 words
- ♥ Feeds himself with spoon or fork
- ♥ Mimics words and objects
- ♥ Walks backwards, runs stiffly, throws a ball
- ♥ Shows affection and blows kisses
- ♥ Scribbles and imitates drawing with crayons

Reference: Maternal and Child Health Bureau, *Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1994, Arlington, VA.